

APOSTASY AND DECEPTION IN CHRISTIAN MUSIC

March 25, 1998 (David W. Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, www.wayoflife.org) - An excellent new book on music is titled *Apostasy and Deception in Christian Music* by Gordon Sears (1998, Songfest, P.O. Box 182, Coldwater, MI 49036). The author has been involved with church music for many years and has witnessed the sad deterioration in the spiritual quality of the music in many churches. Following are the chapter titles:

Chapter 1 - Apostasy in Music

Chapter 2 - Deception in Music

Chapter 3 - The Sin of Carnality

Chapter 4 - The Strange Silence

Chapter 5 - What Others Say

Chapter 6 - Preparing for the Storm. Signs of an impending storm are clearly seen on the horizon. It is time to take a stand and strengthen our homes and churches for more Satanic evils that may lie ahead.

Chapter 5 is particularly important. It contains the testimonies of preachers and music directors on why and how they have kept Contemporary Christian Music out of their churches. Consider one of these--that of J. Richard Nichols, minister of music at Hillsdale Baptist Church, Tampa, Florida --

"Music has existed since the beginning of time. God created it as He did all things. Then God created man, and eventually man sinned. The influence of sin is found in every aspect of life, including music. In fact, the influence of sin in music is greater than in language, because music is known as the "universal language." Because this influence is so great, it is important for us to know about what we listen to or perform.

"Two words that have been important in my musical career are 'appropriate' and 'excellent.' Let take the word 'appropriate.' There are some words that are not appropriate to say at any time. We hear words used today that you would not have heard publicly 15 to 20 years ago. The standard of appropriateness has changed because it is based upon one's own opinion or personal preferences. That standard varies with the individual and therefore cannot be considered to be absolute. However, should a person have a Biblical standard based on absolute truth, he no longer has a personal opinion, but a position that is based upon biblical principles. I find many music directors do not have a musical position based upon Scripture. I'm not sure why. Some may have never been challenged to search the Scriptures. Others only see themselves as musicians and not ministers. I found it interesting that the musicians in the temple worship were taken from the priesthood and were under the same spiritual standard as the priests. Still others pick music based on what the general congregation likes, especially those who cater to the teens. I've talked with music publishers who say they only publish what the people want or what sells.

"The second word is 'excellent.' A piece of clothing may be all right, but I try to find the dress that is excellent for my wife. I want her to look excellent. In like manner I search for music that

is excellent in exalting Christ. I want each choir number to be the very best for Him. It is He whom we worship, not man.

"It is no secret among musicians that the music itself says something and makes a statement. Music does create moods and appeals to the emotions. I have even found some good songs musically that have very weak lyrics or have words that are not theologically correct. I want a song to 'say' the same thing musically and textually. I want music that first appeals to the soul and heart before it appeals to the flesh. I have found in life the flesh always screams to be heard.

"For thirty years I, along with others, have taught voice and have trained children to adult choirs and instrumentalists. Along with the training, we teach a Biblical philosophy of music that brings honor and glory to God and causes people to be desirous of a heart relationship with Him. (I actually work with my choir more on getting the message across than the music because the reason for singing is to communicate the message.) The music should complement the message, not compete with it. We have taught our people what good, sound, God-honoring music is" (J. Richard Nichols, quoted in Gordon Sears, *Apostasy and Deception in Christian Music*, pp. 85-87).

Order this book from Songfest, P.O. Box 182, Coldwater, MI 49036. It is \$6.95 + 1 S/H. Please address all questions about the book directly to the publisher.